

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 452 499

CS 014 362

TITLE Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards: Grades K-12.
INSTITUTION Nebraska State Dept. of Education, Lincoln.
PUB DATE 1998-02-06
NOTE 30p.; Adopted by the State Board of Education, February 6, 1998.
AVAILABLE FROM For full text:
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/Issu/READWrite.pdf>.
PUB TYPE Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Standards; Classroom Techniques; Elementary Secondary Education; *Language Arts; Parent Participation; Public Schools; *Reading Achievement; *State Standards; *Student Educational Objectives; *Writing Achievement
IDENTIFIERS *Nebraska

ABSTRACT

The Nebraska K-12 Reading/Writing Standards reflect what students should know and be able to do by the end of grades 1, 4, 8, and 12. In addition to identifying grade-level specific standards, the Reading/Writing Standards are further divided into the following four topic strands: (1) Reading--decoding written language and using printed material to construct meaning; (2) Writing--recording language graphically by hand or other means (such as typewriting or word processing); (3) Speaking--the act of communicating through oral language; and (4) Listening--the act of understanding speech and speech sounds. Each set of standards offers suggested classroom practices and suggested parent activities. Contains 2 sources. (NKA)

Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards: Grades K-12.

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Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards Grades K-12

**Adopted by the State Board of Education
February 6, 1998**

The Nebraska K-12 Reading/Writing Standards reflect what students should know and be able to do by the end of grades 1, 4, 8, and 12. In addition to identifying grade-level specific standards, the Reading/Writing Standards are further divided into the following four topic strands:

- Reading** - decoding written language and using printed material to construct meaning.
- Writing** - recording language graphically by hand or other means (such as typewriting or word processing).
- Speaking** - the act of communicating through oral language.
- Listening** - the act of understanding speech and speech sounds.

The State Board of Education believes that students must become proficient readers and writers to fully participate in our democratic society. Learning to read and write well is critical to a student's well being and success in later life. In fact, children who are proficient readers and writers are more likely to finish school and contribute actively in our increasingly literate society. The Board recognizes that language, reading, and writing are strongly shaped by culture and that educators may use children's home language and culture as a basis for extending children's language and literacy experiences. While the Board recognizes the importance of respecting children's home language and culture, the Board expects educators to teach students standard English conventions needed for reading, writing, and speaking. All students should have the opportunity to acquire standard English.

Students should begin their academic careers with a solid foundation in basic reading and writing skills. The State Board believes that teachers should provide instruction in basic reading and writing skills, including direct systematic phonics instruction. The Reading/Writing Policy of the State Board of Education provides guidance for school districts as they develop and revise reading/writing curriculum to meet the Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards. The Reading/Writing Policy is as follows:

Reading/Writing State Board of Education Policy Adopted December 8, 1995 Revised October 10, 1997

Effective reading/writing skills are essential to success in school and are key to success in life. Therefore, the State Board of Education supports and encourages state and local efforts to help all students become successful readers. The Board encourages persons closest to the child, including parents, teachers, and other educators, to assume responsibility for creating conditions to support successful readers/writers. The Board encourages local school districts to have a policy that recognizes the critical role of reading/writing instruction.

The Board further encourages local school districts to establish a policy that recognizes the importance of providing children with reading skills based both on the structure of language and the meaning of language in context. Establishing a foundation for effective reading is one of the most important functions of schools. Schools will teach systematic phonics in grades K-2 or 1-3. In addition to systematic phonics, students will read and write extensively to apply and develop the reading skills they have learned, including spelling, grammar, and penmanship. Local policy should encourage approaches that are based on the needs of the student and should include emphasis on appropriate strategies that recognize the developing skills of the student.

The Board supports teacher training in systematic phonics and in the use of a variety of skills and techniques for teaching children to read. The Board will promote state level efforts that help schools meet standards for reading/writing.

Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards Grades K-1

With Suggested Classroom Practices and Suggested Parent Activities

R/W 1.1 Reading/Writing

R/W 1.1.1 By the end of first grade, students will read and write most of the words they speak and use.

Student demonstrations:

- Demonstrate and use the 70 phonograms when reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- Use phonetic knowledge to read.
- Use vocabulary knowledge to read unfamiliar words.
- Confirm the accuracy of their reading by using phonics and context clues.
- Recognize common words that are phonetically irregular (e.g., was, were, where).

Suggested classroom practices:

- Teach every student to read, write, hear, and say the 70 phonograms of the code.
- Follow a plan for teaching the 70 phonograms both explicitly and implicitly.
- Teach recognition of common word and syllable patterns (e.g., cvc, cvce).
- Teach students to recognize common sight words that are phonetically irregular (i.e. was, were, where).
- Consider prerequisites for phonics instruction and principles of effective phonics instruction when planning lessons.
- Provide opportunities to read.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read to your child frequently, allowing your child to look at the book with you as you read. Many parents have a regularly scheduled reading time with their children, such as after dinner or before bedtime. The focus of such read-aloud times should be on making reading a pleasurable activity for both the child and the adult, enjoying the story or information being shared. Enjoying shared reading experiences will provide children with opportunities to (a) increase vocabulary knowledge; (b) recognize some common sight words; (c) associate letters with the sounds they represent.
- Provide time and support for your child's attempts to read. It is likely that your child will benefit more from reading if you sit together, taking turns and enjoying discussions about the book.
 - Children's early reading attempts are often governed by the pictures, rather than print. For example, your child may point to pictured objects, labeling and commenting about them. As children progress in their understanding of stories, they begin to look at pictures and tell stories that sound like oral language or storytelling. Eventually, your child may imitate the way you read a familiar book.
 - Children who have had lots of exposure to books usually begin to attend to print on their own. When your child begins to watch the print in books, provide books that use words that are easy to read. In the beginning, read with your child and invite him/her to read a few well-chosen words. Gradually, as your child becomes able, take turns with sentences, speakers, paragraphs and pages. At the end of each section or story, revisit words that caused trouble. Rereading the entire story over several days, and again weeks later, is a powerful way to reinforce this learning.
- Help your child read easy, enjoyable stories as often as possible. Your school or public librarian can help you select books at an appropriate level.

- Point out print that appears in your child's environment, and support attempts to read it. Examples of environmental print include labels on food products, store or street signs, words in newspapers or magazines, and grocery lists. Praise your child's attempt to make sense from print, and point out features of the print that they accurately recognized or features that they may have missed. For example, if a child correctly read the label on a can of peas, you might say, "You read that word! How did you know that said 'peas'?" If the child says, "I saw the picture," you might say, "That's right, but if the picture wasn't there, you could also read the letters. This word starts with the letter 'p' and 'p' stands for a /p/ sound."
- Point out new words. As you encounter new words, touch each letter and say the corresponding sound. Then blend the sounds to create the word. For example, say m-a-n and blend the sounds together to say "man."
- Encourage your child to sound out new words. However, if your child seems frustrated or is reading books with too many words requiring this kind of attention and effort, it is best to find an easier book.
- Encourage your child to spell new words after pronouncing them. Ask your child to say each sound as he/she writes the new words.
- Make writing materials available to your child and encourage their use. Encourage your child to write for everyday purposes, such as making grocery lists, writing messages to family members, labeling items with own name (or names of other family members), keeping a diary of events (trips to parks, museums, etc.). Children at this stage should be encouraged to use phonetic spelling. It is normal for children in early writing stages to omit letters and confuse letter names with sounds, producing such spellings as LFNT for elephant, BN for bean, and FARE for fairy. This is a normal stage of development, so correction should be used wisely. For early writing attempts, you should be most concerned with the child's sensitivity to the prominent sounds that need to be represented.
 - As children become more proficient in recognizing words and spelling prominent sounds, you can begin to work on correct spelling for simple words, such as "can," "will," "and." This is a good time to point out similarities in words, such as "can," "man," "ran," "tan" or "will," "fill," "hill."

R/W 1.1.2 By the end of first grade, students will demonstrate basic phonological awareness and familiarity with the letters of the alphabet, exhibiting a working knowledge of letters and sounds.

Student demonstrations:

- Recognize and name lowercase and uppercase letters of the alphabet.
- Recognize and generate rhyming words.
- Say the initial, final, or vowel sounds of simple, one-syllable words.
- Separate and blend sounds to read words.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Teach the names of the letters of the alphabet and recognition of alphabet letters (both lower- and upper-case).
- Teach the concept of rhyme and provide opportunities for students to recognize and generate rhyming words.
- Teach students to produce and identify the following, when orally presented by the teacher:
 - the onset (i.e., beginning consonant/s) and rime (i.e., vowel plus remainder of letters in a syllable) of a given word.
 - the initial consonant sound in words.
 - words that begin with the same sound (principle of alliteration).
 - the final consonant sound in words.
 - the vowel sound in simple, one-syllable words.

Suggested parent activities:

- Play alphabet games. Examples: sing alphabet songs, play with alphabet books, magnetic letters, blocks. Recite letters of the alphabet as you walk or go up and down stairs. Provide ABC dot-to-dot coloring books, and other letter-play games.
- Watch children's TV shows (such as Sesame Street); show your child how to actively participate.
- Sing songs and read rhyming books. Play rhyming games and clap out syllables.

- Encourage your child to play with words. For example, ask your child to think of words that rhyme or begin with the same letter. Ask questions like, "Can you think of any words that rhyme with 'cat'? What words do you know that begin with the sound of /m/?"
- Children who can separate sounds in words and blend them back together learn to read more readily than children who have difficulty with these tasks. In the beginning, ask your child to practice with simple compound words, such as /base/ and /ball/. For example, ask your child, "What word would you have if you put together these words: butter, fly, pan, cake?" When your child can easily combine compound words, begin to ask more complex questions. For example, ask your child questions that require him/her to isolate and blend the beginning sound in words. "What word would you have if you put these sounds together: /l/ and ight; /m/ and ilk; /p/ and ickle? What sound do you hear first in 'dog,' 'sit,' 'ran?' Which of these words starts with a different sound, 'bag,' 'candy,' 'bike'? Do boat and bear start with the same sound?"
- Ask your child questions that require blending and separating sounds, such as: "What word would you have if you put these sounds together: 's-i-t,' 'l-i-d'?"

R/W 1.1.3 By the end of first grade, students will apply knowledge of the organization of print to their reading and writing.

Student demonstrations:

- Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- Follow pages sequentially when looking at or reading a book.
- Follow words from left to right and top to bottom on a printed page.
- Identify print (rather than pictures) as the feature being read.
- Identify what an author does and what an illustrator does.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Frequently read aloud to students and teach concepts about the forms and functions of print, including:
 - identifying the cover (front and back/beginning and ending) of a book.
 - identifying the title, author and illustrator of a book.
 - the left/right and top/bottom orientation of print.
 - the idea that print, not pictures, is read.
 - following the left/right organization of print on a page.
 - concept of sentence.
 - identifying the beginning and ending of sentences and the capital letters and punctuation marks that signal sentence boundaries.
 - concept of word and the surrounding space that signals the word
- Provide opportunities for students to observe the relationship between oral and written language.
 - Record the child's oral language as he/she dictates a story or observation.
 - Provide opportunities for children to write independently for real-life purposes.
 - Provide opportunities for children to manipulate words in known phrases.
 - Provide opportunities for children to practice matching voice to text.

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide regular access to favorite books. Children often have favorite stories that they like to hear over and over. Rereading stories to children helps them develop their understanding of how print works, in addition to deepening their understanding of the story. For example, children's understanding of the left-to-right movement of print is reinforced when they observe adults or mature readers as they read aloud. Children develop a more solid understanding of how stories are structured when they hear stories over and over. Children who have lots of exposure to books acquire a ready understanding of what educators may refer to as "concepts about print." Many of these concepts are listed as student demonstrations under standard 1.1.3.

- Talk about how print is organized when you read to your child, and ask your child to demonstrate this understanding. For example, to teach the left-to-right organization of print, you might say to your child: "When we read, we start on this side (left side) and move across the page this way (move from left to right)." Demonstrate by pointing to the print as you read. When your child is ready to read on his/her own, you might ask, "Where will you begin reading?" "Which way will you go when you read?" Talk with your child about each of the student demonstrations listed in standard 1.1.3.

R/W 1.1.4 By the end of first grade, students will read and comprehend print and demonstrate the understanding that reading (like conversation) communicates meaning.

Student demonstrations:

- Make predictions based on title, cover, illustrations, and text.
- Retell, in their own words, stories in sequence (beginning, middle, end).
- Identify important story elements (main character, setting, events).
- Distinguish between truth and make-believe in literature.
- Connect what is read to real-life experiences (developing a foundation for later literary analysis).
- Confirm that their reading makes sense by using phonics, context, and vocabulary knowledge.
- Explain in their own words that printed materials provide information.
- Identify common signs and symbols.
- Read and explain their own writing and drawing.
- Choose books appropriate for their own interests, purposes, and reading level.
- Reread favorite books.
- Read different types of literature (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry, folktales).
- Listen to others read from a variety of literature in order to expand vocabulary and develop knowledge of sentence and story structure.
- Use appropriate voice level, phrasing, sentence structure, and intonation when reading aloud.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide background knowledge students need to adequately comprehend text.
- Discuss important story elements, such as main character, setting, problem/goal of main character, resolution of the problem, when reading narratives (stories). This lays the groundwork for later understanding of literary techniques.
- Discuss important or interesting facts when reading informational text (expository text).
- Teach students to prepare for reading (or listening to) a selection by:
 - reading the title of a text and making a general prediction about the text content.
 - setting a purpose for reading.
 - activating their background knowledge about a topic or relating the topic to their own lives.
- Teach students to monitor their comprehension during reading by:
 - stopping periodically to discuss important events or ask relevant questions.
 - encouraging students to make relevant, spontaneous observations and comments about the text.
 - teaching students strategies for repairing comprehension breakdowns (e.g., Rereading or asking for clarification).
- Use dramatic activities (puppetry, story theater, reader's theater), when reasonable, to reinforce the sequence of events in the story.
- Teach students to review the main points of a story (retell) by:
 - retelling the story or describing important information in the text.
 - reviewing story components using a visual organizer (e.g., story map, text illustrations).
 - helping students make connections between the events of the main character and similar events in their own lives (providing a foundation for later literary analysis).
- Provide follow-up activities that relate to the text topic and extend the ideas in the text.

- Provide opportunities for students to select and independently read (or look at) books of their own choice.
 - teach students to use phonics, context and vocabulary knowledge to confirm that their reading makes sense.
 - read informational texts to students.
 - provide common signs and symbols in the classroom environment.
 - provide opportunities for students to read and explain their own writing and drawings.
- Provide printed material that children can read, or attempt to read, independently.
 - teach students to use school and classroom libraries.
 - teach students to identify books they can read independently.
 - use shared reading techniques with children.
 - read from a variety of literature, i.e. share many different types of books and other printed materials with children.
 - assist students in identifying books they enjoy.
 - assign reading outside of school.

Suggested parent activities:

- Before reading to your child or listening to your child read, ask questions and make comments that will start the child thinking about the book. Commonly asked prereading questions include:
 - "What is the title of this book?"
 - "What do you think this book will be about?"
 - "What makes you think so."
 - "Do you think this book is about a real person (animal, etc.), or could it be make-believe? What makes you think so?"
- helping children see the relationship between the book and their own lives often improves their understanding. for example, if you read a book about a zoo, encourage your child to talk about his/her own experiences visiting a zoo.
- Pause for discussions as you read. Use your own judgment about when to pause, but also consider signals from your child. For example, your child may make a spontaneous comment or observation about the text. Stop and discuss language, content, and relevance to real life. Explore the meanings of new words, using them in other sentences and contrasting what they mean with words that have similar meanings.
- When reading stories, discuss the characters, problems, and events in the story. Invite your child to think about how the problems might be solved and predict what might happen next.
- When reading informational text, invite your child to comment about the creatures or events described and to wonder about details or connections not mentioned in the text.
- As you resume reading, ask your child to review what has happened so far in the story or review information he or she has learned thus far.

R/W 1.1.5 By the end of first grade, students will respond to literature.

Student demonstrations:

- Listen to literary selections.
- Provide in their own words the meaning of selected vocabulary from literary selections.
- Retell literary selections they have heard.
- Identify ways in which literary selections relate to their own lives.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Frequently and regularly read quality children's literature to students.
- Discuss important story elements such as characters, settings, and theme.
- Discuss vocabulary encountered in literary works.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss the relationship of the selected literary work to their own lives.
- Provide opportunities for students to read quality literature with teacher support.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read many different types of books to your child. Consider the following types of books when making your selection: picture books, fairytales, poetry, informational books, folktales, easy-to-read books.

R/W 1.1.6 By the end of first grade, students will print neatly and correctly.

Student demonstrations:

- Print using appropriate starting points and strokes.
- Print using a left to right, top to bottom progression.
- Print uppercase and lowercase letters with recognizable accuracy and comfort.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Examine students' attempts at writing to determine appropriate instructional levels.
 - provide opportunities for children to practice writing independently at their individual levels of development.
 - closely monitor students' writing progress and provide them with feedback and instruction to improve their writing.
 - model writing and allow students to see real writing done for real purposes.
 - provide opportunities for students to write for their own real purposes (e.g., making lists, writing thank-you notes, writing invitations).
 - encourage children to trace, copy, and write their own names as best they can.

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide a visual model of correct letter formation. Keep the model in a place easily accessible to your child.
- Ask the child to write for real-life purposes (such as grocery lists, thank-you notes), using writing to communicate with others.

R/W 1.1.7 By the end of first grade, students will write (print) about experiences, stories, people, objects, and events.

Student demonstrations:

- Communicate effectively through composition (writing).
- Use correct spelling of familiar words.
- Use correct grammar in composition (writing).
- Use correct capitalization in composition (writing).
- Use correct punctuation in composition (writing).
- Print their own full names correctly.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Examine students' attempts at writing to determine appropriate expectations for spelling.
 - provide opportunities for students to write for their own real purposes (e.g., making lists, writing thank-you notes, writing invitations).
 - transcribe messages or stories students dictate that accompany their illustrations.
 - provide students opportunities for writing, allowing for development of accuracy.
 - provide students with instructional feedback about their writing.
 - provide students with opportunities to edit their work for final publication.
- Examine students' phonetic spellings to determine appropriate expectations for conventional spelling instruction.
 - provide opportunities for students to examine and compare words (e.g., word sorts).
 - provide opportunities for students to keep records of words they frequently use to promote conventional spelling and expand their writing vocabularies (e.g., word banks).
 - hold students accountable for using conventional spellings of words for which they have demonstrated accurate, independent spelling.

- explicitly teach spellings of words with high-frequency patterns (such as *cvc*, *cvce*), and provide students with guided practice opportunities with these words.
- provide students with opportunities to edit and correct their spelling errors.

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide opportunities for children to write for different purposes. Examples include: label belongings with their own names; label objects in order to learn to read the names of the objects; use writing and drawing to keep a diary or record of special events; write letters to friends or other family members.

R/W 1.2 Speaking

R/W 1.2.1 By the end of first grade, students will speak in clear, complete, coherent sentences using standard English.

Student demonstrations:

- Share information and opinions.
- Ask questions.
- Describe people, places, things, location, size, color, shape, and action.
- Recite short poems, rhymes, and songs.
- Relate experiences in a logical sequence and tell creative stories.
- Describe or explain new information in their own words.
- Use increasingly complex vocabulary and language structures in their own speech.
- Use appropriate voice level, phrasing, sentence structure, and intonation when speaking and reading aloud.
- Contribute to classroom discussions.
- Use the conversational skills of taking turns and staying on topic.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Determine appropriate expectations for the students' instructional levels (this may involve consultation with a speech/language pathologist or ESL teacher).
 - Provide opportunities for students to verbally communicate with peers and adults for authentic purposes throughout the school day.
 - Provide opportunities for each student to make verbal presentations to the class on a regular basis (e.g., sharing, retelling, describing or explaining new information, choral speaking, recitation of poetry or rhymes).
 - Provide opportunities to participate in creative dramatics.
 - Provide students with feedback about the clarity and completeness of their verbal responses.
 - Model appropriate sentence structure.
- Model appropriate use of standard English.
 - Role play situations that might require the use of standard English (e.g., introductions, requesting assistance, eating in a restaurant).
- Model appropriate language use.
 - Give students feedback about the appropriateness of their language use during role play situations in which these aspects of language might be used differently (e.g., calling for help, walking in the hall, expressing various emotions).

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide opportunities for your child to engage in conversations in different settings.
- Provide feedback about the appropriateness of your child's response. In many cases, this can occur through simply modeling the correct language.
- Encourage your child to talk about experiences or special events. Ask your child to retell a story after reading it.

R/W 1.3 Listening

R/W 1.3.1 By the end of first grade, students will listen and be responsible members of the classroom.

Student demonstrations:

- Follow one- and two-step oral directions.
- Attend to speakers, teachers, and classroom discussions.
- Attend to presentations and demonstrations.
- Identify a purpose for listening.
- Ask for clarification when messages don't make sense.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide opportunities to follow verbal directions.
- Teach purpose-setting for listening activities.
- Use proximity, physical prompts, verbal and non-verbal cues.
- Model the use of clarification questions.

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide purposeful reasons for listening. Listening should be taught as part of communication and interaction between real people.
- Engage in frequent conversation with your child, discussing everyday events.
- Ask children to follow oral directions to complete tasks. As they become more proficient, increase the complexity of your directions. Provide praise and corrective feedback to guide them as they carry out your instructions.
- Provide opportunities that require your child to practice listening in different settings, such as musical performances, plays, magic shows, movies.
- Role play various situations in which children must listen attentively.

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Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards

Fourth Grade Standards

With Suggested Classroom Practices and Suggested Parent Activities

R/W 4.1 Reading

R/W 4.1.1 By the end of the fourth grade, students will draw on a variety of strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words and phrases.

Student demonstrations:

- Point out words that are unfamiliar in written form.
- Use phonics and word structure to sound out unfamiliar words.
- Use context clues to confirm the accuracy of their reading.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Model word identification strategies while reading text to students.
- Consider (a) information about current research and effective practices, and (b) students' individual needs when planning word-identification instruction.
- Teach students strategies to use in determining unfamiliar words.
- Provide feedback to students as they independently practice word-identification strategies.
- Ask questions and make comments that lead students to self-correct their errors.
- Allow adequate wait time to encourage students to independently monitor and self-correct word recognition errors.

Suggested parent activities:

- Many children in elementary grades will benefit from closely examining words and word patterns. Children may not see these patterns on their own and may not realize how the structure or spelling of a word can be a direct clue to learning and remembering word meanings. Reading materials already in the home can be used to provide practice activities for children and help them make the connection from the classroom to the real world. Some sample activities are provided below.
 - Challenge children to go on "word hunts" in which they look for words with the same features. Word hunts can be conducted on any kind of printed materials available at home, such as newspapers, magazines, and cookbooks. For example, you can ask your child to look for words that end in the suffix "sion" in today's newspaper or challenge your child to see how many words he/she can find with the ai spelling pattern.
 - Encourage your child to keep a personal dictionary. Children can develop their own "dictionaries" of new words or words with similar patterns by recording words in a notebook.
 - Talk about new words and point out new words or distinguishing features of words as you encounter them.

R/W 4.1.2 By the end of the fourth grade, students will acquire and use correctly an advanced reading vocabulary.

Student demonstrations:

- Point out words and phrases that are causing comprehension difficulty.
- Identify general meanings associated with common prefixes, suffixes, and roots.
- Infer word meaning and usage from taught prefixes, suffixes and roots.
- Identify and use correctly in all content areas words related as antonyms, synonyms, compounds, homophones, and homographs.
- Use reference materials, including an elementary dictionary and thesaurus, to learn and confirm word meanings.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Demonstrate and teach strategies to monitor comprehension.
- Consider (a) information about current research and effective practices; and (b) students' individual needs when planning lessons and assigning readings in all content areas.
- Provide multiple exposures to target vocabulary and develop relationships among words through activities such as word building, word sorts, semantic maps, developing personal glossaries, and reading across the content areas.
- Provide opportunities for students to read frequently at their independent reading levels.
- Provide supervision and feedback as students practice reading text at their instructional reading levels.
- Teach the general meaning and spelling of common roots and affixes.
- Read quality literature aloud to students.
- Provide students with the opportunity to read and discuss quality literature in class.
- Draw attention to new words, providing both oral and written models of word usage.
- Provide opportunities for students to keep records of new vocabulary.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read aloud to your child on a regular basis.
 - Consider reading a chapter a night before your child goes to bed. Children enjoy listening to a good story, and reading stories just beyond their own independent reading levels is a good way to help your child improve vocabulary knowledge and comprehension.
 - Reading many different kinds of materials will expose your child to new vocabulary and sentence structures. This will help your child comprehend different types of stories and articles he/she will encounter both in and out of school.
- Provide time and encouragement for your child to read independently.
 - Provide access to books your child can independently read.
 - Consult with your child's teacher or librarian if you need help selecting books.
- As children read, encourage them to mark unknown words.
 - Children can make their own personal dictionaries in which they write new words, their meanings, and words with similar spellings or meanings.
 - Words can be marked by underlining in pencil or placing a check mark or question mark above the word and in the margin for easy reference.
 - After reading or studying, you and your child can go back and discuss the new words that were identified. Your discussion could include aspects such as: (a) different parts of the word (prefix, root, suffix) and the possible meanings of the word parts; (b) rereading the sentences around the word to understand how the word is used; (c) using a dictionary to find multiple meanings of the word; (d) using a dictionary to discover the origin of the word and discussing how the word origin relates to present-day meaning; (e) thinking of other words with similar spellings or meanings.
 - Using a homemade bookmark is another convenient way to encourage children to identify unknown words for later discussion. Using lightweight pieces of cardboard and construction paper, children can write the name of the book on one side and keep a running list of new words on the other. The bookmarks provide a record both of the books the child has read and all the new words he or she has encountered.
- Ask your child's teacher for help identifying common word parts (prefixes, roots, suffixes) and meanings that your child should know.
- Use and discuss figurative language in conversations with your child. Examples include: idioms ("shake a leg," "get a move on," "it's raining cats and dogs") and similes ("like a bolt of lightning," "as quiet as a mouse").
- Reading and making greeting cards is another way to creatively use language and may often include the use of figurative language.
 - Show your child greeting cards with funny, serious, or thought-provoking messages. Your child can create his or her own cards for friends and relatives using a folded piece of paper, designing a cover, and writing a short verse inside.

- TV can be a source for vocabulary development.
- Have your child keep a weekly TV log and write down new words heard or seen each week. Talk with your child about the word meanings or look them up in a dictionary.
- As your child watches commercials, ask him or her to identify and think about slogans used for various products.
- Ask your child to invent a product and write slogans or an ad for it.

R/W 4.1.3 By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Student demonstrations:

- Draw on strategies such as setting purposes for reading, recalling prior knowledge, previewing illustrations and headings to make predictions, listening to the ideas of others, and comparing information from several sources.
- Identify main ideas and supporting details in fourth-grade-level text.
- Follow instructions written at a fourth-grade level.
- Interpret information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.
- Retell selections in an orderly way.
- Read or view materials of varying difficulty to find answers to specific questions.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Consider (a) information about current research and effective practices in teaching reading comprehension and (b) students' individual needs when planning lessons and assigning readings in all content areas.
- Demonstrate and explicitly teach strategies to support comprehension.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss comprehension strategies they use.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to read many different types of text (e.g., nonfiction, fiction, poetry) written at their instructional and independent reading levels.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to read and follow directions intended for students at the fourth grade level, both independently and with supervised practice and feedback.
- Provide supervised practice and feedback for students as they retell selections both orally and in writing.
- Demonstrate and teach strategies that will support students' retellings and summarizations of selections.
- Provide appropriately supported opportunities for students to read and answer specific questions about fourth-grade-level texts in all content areas.
- Provide multiple opportunities to read, discuss, and interpret diagrams, charts, and graphs in all content areas.
- Provide adequate time and structure for sustained, silent reading.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read aloud to your child on a regular basis.
 - Consider reading a chapter a night before your child goes to bed. Children enjoy listening to a good story, and reading stories just beyond their own independent reading levels is a good way to help your child improve vocabulary knowledge and comprehension.
 - Reading many different kinds of materials will help children learn to comprehend the different types of stories and articles they will encounter both in and out of school.
- Provide opportunities for your child to think about and talk about what he or she has heard.
 - After you have read a story or passage to your child, ask him or her to illustrate a favorite part or certain aspect (such as a main character, the setting, a certain event). A caption can be added to reinforce the drawing's message. Drawings and illustrations help children comprehend the message more clearly and frequently enable them to remember more of what they have read or heard.
 - Ask your child to retell the selection you have read. Ask questions to prompt your child if he or she omits important story elements.
- Use everyday activities to help your child understand and appreciate practical applications of reading.
 - Include your child in the kinds of reading you do in your day-to-day life. For example, you and your child can read and follow directions from a cookbook when preparing meals or snacks. Pre-prepared foods (such as TV dinners or box dinners) can also provide an opportunity for your child to read and follow directions.

- The newspaper or a favorite magazine can also be a source of many reading activities for you and your child.
 - Pick out an interesting article from a newspaper or magazine. As you are preparing lunch or dinner, tell your child that you are busy and ask him or her to read the article to you.
 - Have your child pick a headline from a newspaper or magazine. Help your child change the headline into a question. Then the child can read the article to find an answer to the question.
 - Clip out an interesting article or news story and cut the paragraphs apart. Ask your child to read the paragraphs and put them in order.
- Provide opportunities for your child to interpret information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.
 - Many children enjoy looking at maps, especially those of their own neighborhood or city. Provide a map of your neighborhood and encourage your child to identify the route he or she takes to school or to a friend's home.
 - Your child can also use a city map to plan routes to follow when shopping, going to medical appointments, or attending special events.
 - When planning a vacation, let your child see the road map and help you plan where you will drive. Talk about where you will start and where you will end a trip. Let your child follow the route between these two points.
 - Help your child use the chart from the TV guide to identify the time and day of favorite shows.

R/W 4.1.4 By the end of the fourth grade, students will locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Student demonstrations:

- Use general reference materials including an encyclopedia and thesaurus.
- Use electronic resources such as CD-ROM and online resources.
- Use software programs, such as word processors, to synthesize and present information.
- Use other library resources, such as card or electronic catalog, to locate and select books of interest at their independent reading levels.
- Use indexes including telephone books, almanacs, and dictionaries.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Discuss resource materials used to support learning on a topic, and provide multiple opportunities for students to select and use resource materials to locate specific information.
- Provide opportunities for students to research topics of personal interest.
- Provide opportunities for students to use information resources for real-life purposes.
- Teach strategies for students to self-select books at their independent reading levels.

Suggested parent activities:

- Provide opportunities for your child to visit a public library.
 - Help your child identify a purpose for the library visit (for example, to select a novel to read for enjoyment; to find information about a specific topic of interest).
 - Help your child obtain a library card and learn how the public library system works.
- Explore access to computers and technology.
 - If a computer isn't available at home, learn about the availability of computers at your local library or public school.
- Help your child understand and use telephone books.
 - Help your child find your or a friend's listing in the white pages of the telephone book. Explain the organization and information found in the white pages. Ask your child to look up numbers when you need them.
- Help your child understand and use the yellow pages. Explore the index and help your child understand how information is categorically organized. To practice using the yellow pages, give your child a hypothetical situation; and ask him or her to find a related service or company in the yellow pages. You may also want to have your child look through the yellow pages, select a service, and write an ad for it.
- Show your child how to locate emergency numbers in the telephone book.

R/W 4.1.5 By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify characteristics of different types of text.

Student demonstrations:

- Distinguish among common forms of literature such as poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.
- Compare the use of fact and fantasy in historical fiction with other forms of literature.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Frequently read samples of many different types of text aloud to students (e.g., poetry, fiction, historical fiction, nonfiction).
- Identify and discuss characteristics of different types of text.
- Provide opportunities for students to select, read, and discuss different types of texts.
- Organize some instruction around a particular type of literature (such as a folktale), theme (such as good vs. evil), or a particular author.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read many different kinds of books, stories, articles, and poems to your child.
- If needed, ask your child's teacher or librarian for help identifying a broad selection of texts.
- Keep a record of stories that you read so that you may more easily determine if you are reading from a variety of book types.
- Compare different types of books, discussing how they are alike and how they are different.
- Encourage your child to read different types of books, stories, articles, and poems.

R/W 4.1.6 By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their answers.

Student demonstrations:

- Identify the elements of plot, character, and setting in a favorite story.
- Use strategies such as story mapping to support understanding.
- Identify similarities in characters and events across stories.
- Identify theme or underlying message in interpreting fiction.
- Note how different uses of language affect the readers' expectations of how to read and interpret text.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide multiple opportunities for students to identify and compare main characters and events across stories.
- Allow students multiple opportunities, in varying formats, to offer responses to works that are read or heard.
- Organize some instruction around a particular type of literature (such as a folktale), theme (such as good vs. evil), or a particular author.
- Teach strategies such as story mapping to support students' understanding of text structure and important story elements.
- Encourage the use of visual organizers as an aid to story comprehension when needed.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to read and discuss elements of fiction (characters, plot, setting, characters' goals and resolution).
- Employ dramatic activities and oral performances, when appropriate, to support students' comprehension of fiction and plays.
- Discuss and practice identifying supporting evidence for interpretations of text.
- Teach students strategies to recognize, generate, and answer literal-, inferential-, and evaluative-level questions related to fictional text.

Suggested parent activities:

- Identifying character, plot, theme, structure and setting helps children make sense of text and enables them to find pleasing and meaningful patterns in the things they read.
 - Talk with children about the main characters in the story. Ask them to describe characters' qualities and relate them to people or characters in familiar books or movies. Discuss the goals and motivations of characters they encounter in books and movies.
 - Encourage your child to make predictions about the story, based on his or her knowledge of familiar story plots. Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" "What could [the main character] have done differently?" "How would you solve the problem?" "How would you end this story?"
 - Discuss the underlying message or theme in stories, but take care not to overdo this activity--remember that stories are often enjoyable in and of themselves, even without searching for a "message" or "moral." Some stories, such as fables, are intentionally designed to convey a message or moral. Those types of stories are specially designed to encourage discussion about a particular theme or message. Your child's teacher or librarian can help you identify stories that have a special message or moral.
 - Discuss the setting of the story with your child. Consider the historical time period in which the story might have taken place or the clues that setting gives to the kind of story that will follow. Ask questions like "Could this story happen today?" "What clues does the author give you to know that this story happened long ago?" "What kind of story usually starts with 'once upon a time'?" Discuss the place that is described and ask your child to talk about how he or she pictures the place.
 - Read lots of different kinds of stories to children to help build their repertoire of knowledge of different kinds of story patterns and elements.

R/W 4.1.7 By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Identify structures such as comparison and contrast, chronological or logical order, and use knowledge of these structures when reading.
- Ask how, why, and what-if questions in interpreting nonfiction text.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Explain the influence of readers' experiences on their individual interpretations of text.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Teach students to recognize common nonfiction text structures such as compare/contrast, chronological order.
- Demonstrate the use of various visual organizers to assist with text comprehension.
- Encourage the use of student-generated visual organizers to support comprehension (when needed).
- Teach strategies that enable students to recognize, generate, and answer literal-, inferential-, and evaluative-level questions related to nonfiction text.
- Provide students with multiple opportunities to read nonfiction text of varying levels of difficulty across content areas.
- Discuss and practice identifying supporting evidence for interpretations of text.
- Discuss and practice distinguishing between fact and opinion.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read news and magazine articles and informational books with your child.
- Before reading, discuss the purpose of reading the informational text and identify questions that you and your child would want the text to help you answer.
- During reading, pause occasionally to discuss the information you've read up to that point.

- After reading, discuss whether the text helped you answer your original questions. Talk about what you could do to find information to answer other questions about the topic.
- Ask your child to read a short editorial printed in your local newspaper. Help him or her distinguish between fact and opinion by underlining the facts and circling the opinions. As your child progresses in understanding the difference between fact and opinion, have him or her do the preceding activity independently. You could also ask your child to write an editorial on a topic, identifying his or her own facts and opinions. Discuss why one person's opinion might be different from another's opinion, even though the facts may be the same.

R/W 4.1.8* By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Student demonstrations:

- Read and compare narratives and stories across geographic regions, cultures, and time periods.
- Read and compare narratives and stories to students' present-day lives.
- Read biographies of historical figures important in the American culture.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide opportunities for students to read and respond to quality literature written by people with various cultural perspectives.
- Provide opportunities for students to read and respond to quality literature written about their own culture.

Suggested parent activities:

- Read and discuss folktales, legends, and myths from around the world. Compare stories and identify common ideas.
- Provide access to biographies or historical accounts of important events in American culture. Talk about important historical figures and their contributions to American culture.

R/W 4.2 Writing

R/W 4.2.1 By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify, describe, and apply knowledge of the structure of the English language and standard English conventions for sentence structure, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Student demonstrations:

- Distinguish between formal and oral language patterns and the appropriate uses of each.
- Identify and use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, paragraph indentation.
- Identify and use nouns, verbs, and personal pronouns.

R/W 4.2.2 By the end of the fourth grade, students will write compositions with a clear focus, logically related ideas, and adequate supporting detail.

Student demonstrations:

- Develop a plan for writing, using a variety of strategies to generate and organize ideas.
- Write several paragraphs on the same topic.
- Write well-organized compositions with a beginning, middle, and end.

R/W 4.2.3 By the end of the fourth grade, students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, word choice (vocabulary), voice, sentence fluency and standard English conventions after revising and editing their compositions.

Student demonstrations:

- Revise their writing to improve clarity and logical sequence after looking for missing information and determining if their ideas follow each other in a logical order.
- Use knowledge of punctuation, usage, sentence structure, and standard English spelling to edit their writing.
- Use legible cursive writing and/or a word processor when publishing written work.

- Use prescribed criteria from a scoring rubric to evaluate their own and others' compositions before presenting them to an audience.
- Form and explain their own standards or judgments of quality.

R/W 4.2.4 By the end of the fourth grade, students will use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Student demonstrations:

- Write descriptive and narrative compositions about experiences, stories, people, objects, and events.
- Write poems of varied forms.
- Write paragraphs and reports to inform peers and demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.

Suggested classroom practices (Standards 4.2.1-4.2.4):

- Consider research and recommended practices for teaching composition when planning writing lessons.
- Assist students in developing and using a writing process (a plan for writing), providing timely feedback about their writing attempts.
- Provide students with a rubric, or evaluation outline, to guide them as they compose.
- Provide models of high quality, average, and unacceptable compositions and discuss distinguishing characteristics of each.
- Model and teach students to use a writing process to plan, organize, revise and edit their work.
- Teach students to compose cohesive paragraphs about a single topic.
- Provide students with multiple opportunities to revise and edit their compositions with feedback from teachers, peers, or family members.
- Teach students to develop their own criteria for revision and editing work.
- Provide opportunities to present selected compositions to specific audiences.
- Teach students to identify and use nouns, verbs, and personal pronouns.
- Teach common structures for descriptive and narrative compositions.
- Provide multiple examples of both descriptive and narrative text.
- Provide supervised practice and feedback as students draft, revise, and edit their compositions.
- Teach students to recognize and write common forms of poetry, including cinquains, diamantes, haiku, limericks, poems with rhyming couplets, and free verse.

Suggested parent activities (Standards 4.2.1-4.2.4):

- Provide opportunities for your child to use writing for many different purposes.
 - Encourage your child to keep a diary to record daily events and his or her own thoughts.
 - Encourage your child to write letters to family members and friends.
 - Have your child help you make lists for shopping trips.
 - Keep a notepad near the phone or in a designated spot. Encourage your child to write notes to you and other family members to inform you of special events, items to remember, or special requests.
 - Have your child write about special events or trips you want to remember. Keep a folder or notebook of these special times and occasionally read your child's accounts.
 - Consider starting a family newsletter to share with friends and relatives. Have your child write a column or article talking about an item of special interest.
 - Provide your child with feedback about his/her compositions.

R/W 4.2.5 By the end of the fourth grade, students will use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Student demonstrations:

- Generate their own relevant questions in their exploration of a topic.
- Record important ideas from information provided by others.
- Record important ideas from their readings.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Demonstrate and model a variety of strategies for recording information from both orally presented and written sources.
- Provide students with supervised opportunities to use different strategies as they record information from speakers, video, or written sources.
- Teach students basic steps in summarizing information.
- Provide supervised opportunities to practice summarization.
- Provide opportunities for students to evaluate the effectiveness of their summaries and written notes.

Suggested parent activities:

- Encourage children to ask questions and make observations about the world around them. Help your child generate questions like:
 - "What would happen if . . ."
 - "I wonder why . . ."
 - "How does that work?"
- Show your child how you use notes or outlines to remember and learn information.
- Ask your child to summarize information, both orally and in written form.
- Have your child write a summary of a favorite book, movie, or TV episode, helping him or her identify the main points and highlights.
- Ask your child to summarize his or her day.

R/W 4.3 Speaking

R/W 4.3.1 By the end of the fourth grade, students will pose questions and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions in order to acquire new knowledge.

Student demonstrations:

- Contribute knowledge and ask questions relevant to the topic discussed.
- Use subject-related vocabulary in discussions.
- Provide accurate directions to individuals and small groups.
- Stay on topic or create appropriate transitions to new topics.
- Gain the floor in appropriate ways.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide each student with opportunities and strategies that allow each individual to contribute meaningfully to class discussions.
- Model the use of new vocabulary during class discussion.
- Make clarifying or reflective statements and ask guiding questions that assist students in (a) identifying the problem or issue; (b) clarifying or redirecting the discussion as needed; (c) summarizing or leading students to new questions or issues for future discussions.
- Provide students with opportunities to work in structured groups of various sizes.
- Teach students appropriate ways to gain the floor when others are talking.
- Teach students to distinguish between information that is on topic and information that is extraneous to the topic being discussed.
- Provide students with opportunities to take on various roles in small and large groups, including the role of giving directions to others.

R/W 4.3.2 By the end of the fourth grade, students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and information to be conveyed.

Student demonstrations:

- Give oral presentations using eye contact, proper pace, volume, and clear enunciation.
- Give oral presentations of prose and poetry with fluency and expression.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Model oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and information to be conveyed.
- Provide students with examples of presentations that are of high, average, and poor quality.
- Provide students with guidelines and/or scoring rubrics to help them prepare for presentations in advance.

R/W 4.4 Listening

R/W 4.4.1 By the end of the fourth grade, students will gain information or complete tasks by listening.

Student demonstrations:

- Listen to information and take notes to improve comprehension.
- Listen to and follow multiple-step oral directions.
- Use active listening, showing consideration of others' contributions to discussions.

Suggested classroom practices:

- Provide guided practice opportunities for students to record information presented orally.
- Provide opportunities for students to follow multiple-step directions presented orally.
- Demonstrate and discuss the characteristics of active listening.
- Explain the characteristics of appropriate and inappropriate consideration of others during discussions.
- Provide students with feedback about their consideration of others during classroom discussions.

Suggested parent activities (Standards 4.3.1–4.4.1):

- Regularly engage your child in conversation and provide him or her with opportunities to listen to and engage in conversations with others.
- Talk about and model appropriate ways to gain the floor when speaking.
- Notice when your child uses appropriate techniques when interacting with others. Provide feedback to your child about his or her behavior.
- During family gathering times (such as the evening meal), occasionally ask your child to be the conversation "leader."
- Role play various social settings and the behaviors expected in those settings. For example, you might pretend to be eating in a restaurant or having a snack at a reception.
- Consider limiting the amount of time spent watching TV and substitute conversation or participating in board games or other family activities instead.
- Provide opportunities for your child to give oral directions to others.
 - Play games like "Simon Says" or "Mother May I?"
 - Ask your child to help you recreate a project he or she has completed at school.
 - Have your child give directions for performing household chores or activities.
- Provide opportunities for your child to deliver information to an audience.
- Recruit family members and friends to listen to occasional oral presentations your child provides.
- Provide your child with feedback about his or her performance, discussing the strengths you observed.
- Give your child suggestions for improving his or her performance, explaining and modeling the suggestions as you discuss them.

SOURCES:

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Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards

Eighth Grade Standards

With Suggested Classroom Practices and Suggested Parent Activities

R/W 8.1 Reading

Introduction

The standards for grade 8 presume that basic skills in reading have been taught before grade 4 and that students are independent readers. For those students who are still having difficulty in developing grade level reading skills, teachers should continue to work with students in those areas appropriate to the skills and needs of the individual student.

Grades 4 through 8 should continue the emphasis on developing reading skills (skill building) while maintaining the emphasis on expanding the variety and depth of reading experiences.

Skill building should continue for all students in the following areas:

Use knowledge of roots and affixes to read specialized vocabulary in the content areas.

- *Use context clues to confirm the accuracy of their reading.*
- *Adjust reading rate based on purposes for reading.*
- *Identify words and phrases that are causing comprehension difficulty.*
- *Identify meanings associated with prefixes, suffixes, and roots to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas.*
- *Identify and use correctly in all content areas words related as antonyms, synonyms, compounds, homophones, and homographs.*
- *Use reference materials, such as a standard dictionary or thesaurus, to learn and confirm word meanings.*

In order to expand the variety and depth of the reading experience, students should be assigned regular reading activities from reading lists developed by schools or other recognized sources.

R/W 8.1.1 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Student demonstrations:

- *Monitor their understanding as they read.*
- *Draw on strategies such as recalling text (genre) characteristics, generating essential questions, and clarifying ideas by rereading and discussing.*
- *Identify main ideas and supporting details in eighth-grade level text.*
- *Follow instructions written at an eighth-grade level.*
- *Interpret information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.*
- *Evaluate information for relevance and accuracy, based on prior knowledge and classroom discussion.*
- *Read materials of varying difficulty to find answers to specific questions.*
- *Demonstrate comprehension through written and oral responses.*

R/W 8.1.2 By the end of the eighth grade, students will locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Student demonstrations:

- Use reference materials such as encyclopedia, thesaurus, periodicals, almanacs, and indexes.
- Use electronic resources such as CD-ROM and online resources.
- Use software programs, such as word processing and multimedia presentation tools, to synthesize and present information.
- Use other library resources, such as a card or electronic catalog, to locate and select books and other materials to meet personal interests and learning needs.
- Identify and gather resources that provide relevant and reliable information for research projects.

R/W 8.1.3 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify characteristics of different types of text.

Student demonstrations:

- Students will independently read literature written in English, including fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction prose.
- Identify and analyze characteristics of four major types of literature: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
- Explain how an author uses literary form to accomplish a purpose.

R/W 8.1.4 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Locate and analyze elements of plot and characterization.
- Describe how qualities of central characters determine resolution of the conflict.
- Identify implied or directly stated themes in literature.
- Analyze and evaluate similar themes across a variety of selections, distinguishing theme from topic.

R/W 8.1.5 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Identify common expository organizational structures and graphic features to comprehend information in all academic disciplines.
- Generate visual organizers to support comprehension of informational text.

R/W 8.1.6 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Student demonstrations:

- Read and compare narratives and stories across geographic regions, cultures, and time periods.
- Read stories and biographies of historical figures important in the United States and Nebraska.

R/W 8.1.7 By the end of the eighth grade, students will interpret the meaning of literary works, nonfiction, films, and media by using different analytic techniques.

Student demonstrations:

- Analyze how a short story, poem, film, or essay can be shown to reflect the author's personal history, attitudes, and beliefs.

- Analyze how a work can be shown to reflect the period, ideas, customs, and outlooks of a people living in a particular time in history.
- Evaluate information for relevance and accuracy.
- Analyze how readers' prior knowledge and experience can influence each reader's perception of a particular text.

R/W 8.2 Writing

R/W 8.2.1 By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify, describe, and apply knowledge of the structure of the English language and standard English conventions for sentence structure, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Student demonstrations:

- Identify and use appropriately parts of speech, types of sentences, mechanics, usage, sentence structure and standard English spelling.
- Use correct capitalization, paragraph indentation, usage, sentence structure, and standard English spelling.

R/W 8.2.2 By the end of the eighth grade, students will write compositions with a clear focus, logically related ideas, and adequate supporting detail.

Student demonstrations:

- Write compositions with a clear focus and supporting ideas.
- Explain strategies used to generate and organize ideas.

R/W 8.2.3 By the end of the eighth grade, students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, word choice, voice, sentence fluency, and standard English conventions after revising and editing their compositions.

Student demonstrations:

- Revise their writing to improve organization and word choice after checking the logic underlying the order of their ideas and the precision of their vocabulary.
- Use knowledge of types of sentences, mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and standard English spelling to edit their writing.
- Use group-generated criteria for evaluating different forms of writing, and explain why these are important before applying them.
- Form and explain their own standards or judgments of quality.
- Write legibly.

R/W 8.2.4 By the end of the eighth grade, students will use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Student demonstrations:

- Develop narrative, literary, expository, and technical writings for specific audiences.
- Write to describe, explain, persuade, and inform.

R/W 8.2.5 By the end of the eighth grade, students will use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Student demonstrations:

- Generate questions, take notes, and summarize information gleaned from reference works and experts.
- Use and document references appropriately.

R/W 8.3 Speaking

R/W 8.3.1 By the end of the eighth grade, students will pose questions and contribute their own information or ideas in class discussions in order to acquire new knowledge.

Student demonstrations:

- Use discussion skills to assume leadership and participant roles to complete assigned projects.

R/W 8.3.2 By the end of the eighth grade, students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and information to be conveyed.

Student demonstrations:

- Present similar content for various audiences (peers, parents, younger students), showing appropriate changes in delivery (gestures, vocabulary, pace, visual aids).
- Apply understanding of agreed-upon rules and individual roles in a variety of discussion formats, such as lectures, discussions, conversations, team projects, presentations, and interviews.

R/W 8.4 Listening

R/W 8.4.1 By the end of the eighth grade, students will apply listening skills in a variety of settings.

Student demonstrations:

- Apply listening skills in practical settings.
- Adapt and apply listening strategies to the setting.

SOURCES:

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NEBRASKA READING/WRITING STANDARDS

Twelfth Grade Standards

With Suggested Classroom Practices and Suggested Parent Activities

R/W 12.1 Reading

Introduction

The standards for grade 12 presume that basic skills in reading have been taught before grade 4 and that students are independent readers. For those students who are still having difficulty in developing grade level reading skills, teachers should continue to work with students in those areas appropriate to the skills and needs of the individual student.

Grades 8 through 12 should continue the emphasis on developing reading skills (skill building) while maintaining the emphasis on expanding the variety and depth of reading experiences.

Skill building should continue for all students in the following areas:

- *Use knowledge of roots and affixes to read specialized vocabulary in the content areas.*
- *Use knowledge of literary allusions to read and understand word meanings.*
- *Adjust reading rate based on purposes for reading.*
- *Identify words and phrases that are causing comprehension difficulty.*
- *Identify meanings associated with prefixes, suffixes, and roots to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas.*
- *Identify and use correctly in all content areas words with literal and figurative meanings, idioms, and structural patterns of words that indicate different meanings or functions.*
- *Use reference materials, such as a standard dictionary or thesaurus, to learn and confirm word meanings.*

In order to expand the variety and depth of the reading experience, students should be assigned regular reading activities from reading lists developed by schools or other recognized sources.

R/W 12.1.1 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Student demonstrations:

- Use and explain a variety of strategies as they comprehend text.
- Identify main ideas and supporting details in twelfth-grade level text.
- Follow instructions written at a twelfth-grade level.
- Read materials of varying difficulty to find answers to specific questions.
- Interpret information from graphs, charts, and diagrams, such as maps, blueprints, or schematics.
- Demonstrate comprehension through written and oral responses.

R/W 12.1.2 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Student demonstrations:

- Extend the use of electronic and print reference resources to meet information needs, including the use of such resources as gazetteers, atlases, specialized indexes, bibliographies, periodicals, handbooks, manuals, government documents, books of quotations, and college and career resources.
- Use electronic resources such as CD-ROM and online resources.

- Use software programs, such as word processing and multimedia presentation tools, to synthesize and present information.
- Use other library resources to select reading materials and resources of interest.
- Identify and gather resources that provide relevant and reliable information for research projects.

R/W 12.1.3 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of characteristics of different types of text.

Student demonstrations:

- Students will independently read literature written in English, including fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction prose.
- Compare and contrast the presentation of a similar theme or topic across types of literature to explain how the type of literature shapes the message.
- Identify and analyze characteristics of literature such as satire, parody, and allegory, that overlap or cut across the lines of basic genre classifications such as poetry, prose, drama, novel, short story, essay, or editorial.

R/W 12.1.4 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify, analyze, and apply theme in literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Apply knowledge of the concept that theme or meaning of a selection may involve several ideas.
- Analyze and compare works that express a universal theme, providing evidence to support ideas.
- Apply knowledge of the concept that text can represent a view of life or a comment on life, and locate evidence in the text to support understanding of a theme.

R/W 12.1.5 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Locate and analyze such elements in fiction as point of view, foreshadowing, and irony.
- Analyze, evaluate, and apply knowledge of how authors use such elements of fiction as point of view, characterization, and irony for specific rhetorical and aesthetic purposes.

R/W 12.1.6 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Student demonstrations:

- Analyze and describe the structure and elements of biographical and other nonfictional works.
- Analyze, explain, and evaluate how authors use the elements of nonfiction to achieve their purposes.
- Determine the accuracy, recency, and reliability of materials from different sources.
- Analyze and apply technical data and procedures found in service manuals, repair manuals and operators' manuals.

R/W 12.1.7 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will read literature written in English, including fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction prose.

Student demonstrations:

- Read and respond to selected works of British literature, written by both men and women.
- Read and respond to selected works written by authors (both men and women) of their own and other cultures.
- Analyze and evaluate the works of Nebraska authors.

R/W 12.1.8 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will interpret the meaning of literary works, nonfiction, films, and media by using different analytic techniques.

Student demonstrations:

- Analyze the aesthetic qualities of works of poetry, drama, fiction, or film.
- Present specific evidence from the text to support interpretations.
- Analyze philosophical arguments presented in novels, films, plays, essays, or poems.
- Analyze an author's political ideology as portrayed in a selected work.
- Analyze archetypal patterns found in works of literature or nonfiction.
- Analyze the impact of readers' experiences on their interpretations of text.

R/W 12.2 Writing

R/W 12.2.1 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify, describe, and apply knowledge of the structure of the English language and standard English conventions for sentence structure, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Student demonstrations:

- Apply all conventions of standard English to writing.

R/W 12.2.2 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will write compositions with a clear focus, logically related ideas, and adequate supporting detail.

Student demonstrations:

- Write compositions with a clear focus, adequate detail, and well-developed paragraphs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used to generate and organize ideas.

R/W 12.2.3 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, word choice, voice, sentence fluency and standard English conventions after revising and editing their compositions.

Student demonstrations:

- Revise their writing to improve voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and subtlety of meaning after rethinking how well they have addressed questions of purpose, audience, and genre.
- Use all conventions of standard English in their writing across the curriculum.
- Individually develop, explain, and use criteria for assessing their own composition work across the curriculum.
- Revise writing for various publications, such as school newspapers and community publications.

R/W 12.2.4 By the end of twelfth grade, students will use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Student demonstrations:

- Develop narrative, persuasive, descriptive, technical, and expository compositions for identified audiences.
- Revise writing based on feedback from multiple audiences, such as teachers, peers, family, and business and community members.
- Use and cite appropriate sources in their writing for research purposes.
- Discuss issues and examples of proper citation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of copyright and fair use standards.

R/W 12.2.5 By the end of twelfth grade, students will use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Student demonstrations:

- Use their own questions, summaries, notes, and outlines to learn in all content areas.
- Use their own summaries, notes, and outlines in writing research papers.

R/W 12.3 Speaking

R/W 12.3.1 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will pose questions and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions in order to acquire new knowledge.

Student demonstrations:

- Use speaking skills to participate in and lead group discussions.
- Use speaking skills to assume leadership and participant roles to complete projects.

R/W 12.3.2 By the end of the twelfth grade, students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and information to be conveyed.

Student demonstrations:

- Deliver formal oral presentations using clear enunciation, gestures, tone, vocabulary, and organization appropriate for a particular audience.
- Use multimedia to deliver formal presentations.
- Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research, citing sources used.
- Identify and practice techniques such as setting time limits for speakers and deadlines for decision-making to improve the productivity of group discussions.
- Use verbal and nonverbal strategies to maintain communication.

R/W 12.4 Listening

R/W 12.4.1 By the end of twelfth grade, students will apply listening skills for a variety of purposes.

Student demonstrations:

- Apply listening skills to learn new information from speakers and visual media.
- Apply listening skills to carry out orders or procedures in a variety of settings.
- Apply listening skills to evaluate messages.

SOURCES:

Massachusetts Department of Education (1997). *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework*. Malden, MA.

Virginia Department of Education (1996). *English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools*. Richmond, VA.